

Montana Teen Driver Education and Training

Module 6.3

Drowsy Driving

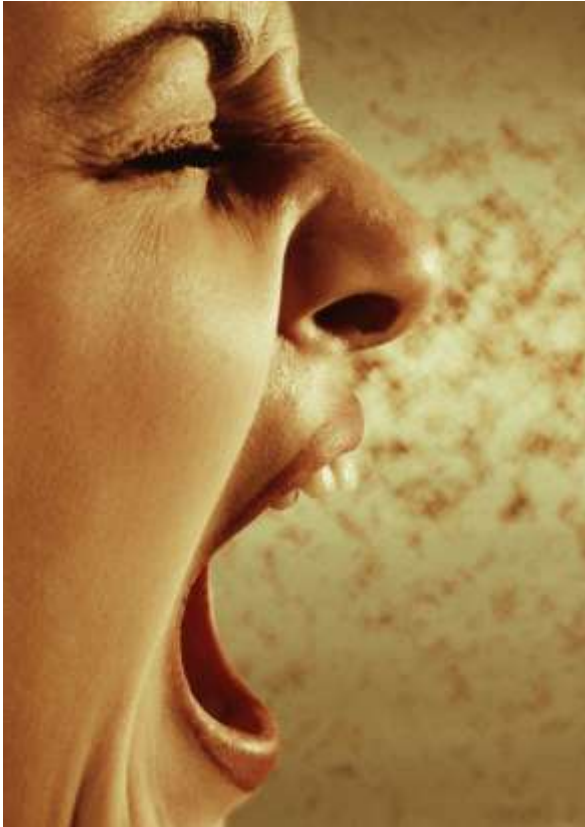
Drive Alert. Arrive Alive

Objectives – Drowsy Driving

Students will understand and be able to explain:

- the physical and mental effects of fatigue on driver behavior;
- the importance of sleep and its effect on driving performance;
- the physical and mental symptoms of fatigue on the driving task;
- the driving hazards associated with drowsy driving;
- and methods to delay or avoid driving while fatigued and drowsy.

What is driver fatigue?



Fatigue is:

- tiredness
- drowsiness
- exhaustion
- Fatigue can impair your driving long before you “nod off” at the wheel.

Why is driving drowsy dangerous?



Drowsy Driving = Impaired Driving

Being awake for 18 hours straight is equal to a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08%, which is legally drunk. If you don't get the sleep you need, you could be as impaired as someone who is drunk behind the wheel.



Teens and Sleep

Why are young drivers more likely to drive drowsy?

- Teens need at least 8 to 9 hours of sleep each night
- Teen's internal biological clocks keep them awake later in the evening and keep them sleeping later in the morning
- Lifestyle habits (socializing, video games, etc.)
- Demands of school, sports and work schedules





Student Discussion

- In groups of 3-4 discuss the symptoms of fatigue.
- Share a time you needed to stay awake, but could not.
- Why did this happen and what did you do about it?
- What are the most effective ways to avoid driving drowsy?
- What should you do if you can't avoid it?

Why is driving fatigued a problem?

Fatigued drivers can have poor concentration and judgment.



Sleepy drivers drift out of their lanes or off the road.

Fatigued drivers are also likely to be in rear-end and head-on collisions.



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How serious is drowsy driving?

- Nationally, 100,000 crashes each year are caused by fatigued drivers.
- One in eight fatal crashes is due to drowsy driving.
- Young drivers (16-24) are twice as likely to be involved in a drowsy driving crash as drivers age 40-59.
- Men have twice as many drowsy driving crashes as women.



Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety



**Tired drivers
take longer to react**



Are you at risk of driving drowsy?

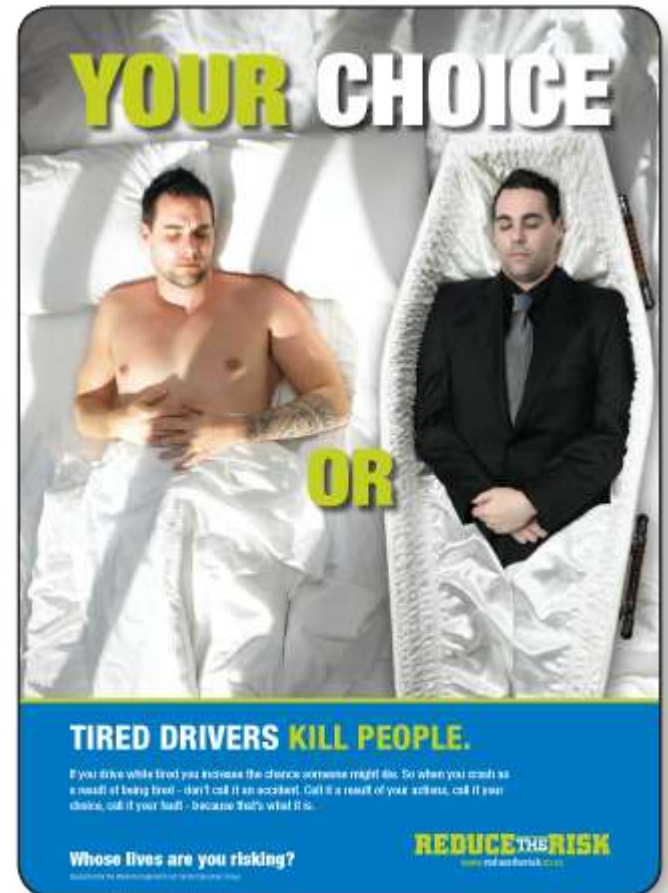
Before you drive, ask yourself:

1. Did I get enough sleep last night?
2. Am I driving a long way without many rest stops?
3. What time of day or night?
Am I going to drive when
I'm usually sleeping?
4. Am I taking medications?
5. How's my workload?
Am I driving alone?
6. What is the driving
environment? Stimulating or monotonous?



You hit the road, but ...

- You yawn frequently.
- Your eyes feel sore or tired.
- You're bored, irritable, or restless.
- It takes you longer to react.
- It's difficult to concentrate.
- You don't check your driving mirrors as frequently.
- You weave and wander out of your lane.
- Your driving speed is inconsistent; you find yourself driving faster or slower.
- You brake suddenly.
- You miss an exit or a turn.
- You start "seeing things".
- You have difficulty keeping your head up or eyes open.



Video: Almost Home



Click to begin video.

You snooze, you lose ...

- 37% of drivers admit to falling asleep while driving
- Drowsy drivers drift out of their lane or off the road
- Most people get sleepy in the late afternoon and early morning, or whenever you would normally be sleeping.



You snooze, you lose ... your life, your mom, your friend, someone's son.



Staying awake while driving



To overcome fatigue do you:

- Drink coffee or caffeinated drinks or take caffeine pills?
- Open windows?
- Turn on the air conditioner or fan?
- Talk to passengers?
- Eat?
- Stop to walk or exercise?
- Listen to loud music?



The problem is **NONE** of these work.

Source: Youth and Road Safety Action Kit, YOURS – Youth for Road Safety (www.youthforroadsafety.org)

Always drive rested and alert



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- Sleep Tips: Hitting the rumble strips isn't the way to stay awake—getting good quality sleep is.
- Use a car pool so that you're driving with someone else awake in the car.

Rumble Strips

**An early warning system to
reduce road departure
crashes**









**Stay alert- Do not panic
Stay in your travel lane**

Center line Rumble Strip Photo source:
Transportation Research Board

If you're too drowsy to drive,
what can you do?



Your sleep needs at each stage of growth

Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers	School-age children	Teenagers	Adults
					
14-15 hours	12-14 hours	11-13 hours	10-11 hours	9-10 hours	7.5-8 hours

Sleep debt is the difference between the amount of sleep you need and the amount you actually get.

Tired drivers leave one tell-tale sign. No skid marks. DRIVE FRESH.



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Standards and Benchmarks

1. Laws and Highway System

- 1.1. know the laws outlined in the Montana Driver's manual;
- 1.2. understand the laws outlined in the Montana Driver's Manual; and
- 1.3. consistently demonstrate knowledge and understanding by responsible adherence to highway transportation system traffic laws and control devices.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1. recognize the importance of making safe and responsible decisions for owning and operating a motor vehicle;
- 2.2. demonstrate the ability to make appropriate decisions while operating a motor vehicle;
- 2.3. consistently display respect for other users of the highway transportation system; and
- 2.4. develop positive habits and attitudes for responsible driving.

3. Visual Skills

- 3.1. know proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle;
- 3.2. communicate and explain proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle;
- 3.3. demonstrate the use of proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle; and
- 3.4. develop habits and attitudes with regard to proper visual skills.

4. Vehicle Control

- 4.1. demonstrate smooth, safe and efficient operation of a motor vehicle; and
- 4.2. develop positive habits and attitudes relative to safe, efficient and smooth vehicle operation.

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Standards and Benchmarks

5. Communication

- 5.1. consistently communicate driving intentions (i.e., use of lights, vehicle position, and personal signals);
- 5.2. adjust driver behavior based on observation of the highway transportation system and other roadway users;
- 5.3. adjust communication (i.e., use of lights, vehicle position, and personal signals) based on observation of the highway transportation system and other users; and
- 5.4. develop positive habits and attitudes for effective communication.

6. Risk Management

- 6.1. understand driver risk-management principles;
- 6.2. demonstrate driver risk-management strategies; and
- 6.3. develop positive habits and attitudes for effective driver risk-management.

7. Lifelong Learning

- 7.1. identify and use a range of learning strategies required to acquire or retain knowledge, positive driving habits, and driving skills for lifelong learning;
- 7.2. establish learning goals that are based on an understanding of one's own current and future learning needs; and
- 7.3. demonstrate knowledge and ability to make informed decisions required for positive driving habits, effective performance, and adaptation to change.

8. Driving Experience

- 8.1. acquire at least the minimum number of BTW hours over at least the minimum number of days, as required by law, with a Montana-approved driver education teacher; and
- 8.2. acquire additional behind-the-wheel driving experience with a parent or guardian's assistance in a variety of driving situations (i.e., night, adverse weather, gravel road, etc.).